

Foundations of Disaster Mental Health

FACT SHEET

December 2005

Course Purpose	The purpose of this basic level Disaster Services training is to prepare licensed mental health professionals to provide for and respond to the psychological needs of people across the continuum of disaster preparedness, response and recovery.
Learning Objectives	<p>After completing this training, participants will be able to—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the American Red Cross Fundamental Principles and mission, the disaster services structure and the disaster settings in which mental health professionals work.• Describe the collaborative relationships of the Red Cross with federal, state and county agencies, national and state mental health associations and other voluntary agencies.• Describe the mental health role in Red Cross disaster response and recovery and the context within which disaster services are provided.• Recognize the psychological impact of disasters on adults, children, families and communities.• Apply the interventions used by Red Cross mental health workers with clients, including adults, children, families, responders and disaster workers.• Describe the legal and ethical implications of disaster mental health work, including licensing, HIPAA regulations, confidentiality and professional ethics.• Identify opportunities for becoming involved with American Red Cross Disaster Mental Health through their local chapters and the Disaster Services Human Resources (DSHR) System.
Course Participants	Participants will be licensed mental health professionals who are considering becoming involved in Red Cross disaster mental health (DMH) preparedness, response and recovery activities at their local

chapter and on national disaster relief operations.

Course Prerequisites	<p>Required: Mental health professional with a current state license include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Counselor• Marriage and Family Therapist• Psychiatrist• Psychologist• A registered nurse (RN) with psychiatric nursing experience and training beyond the normal rotation required for a RN.• Social Worker <p>Recommended: It is strongly recommended that all participants complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Introduction to Disaster Services</i> online which is also available on CD (A3066CD) in GSD• <i>Working With Total Diversity</i> (ARC 1503) <p>Successful completion of one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Family Services: Providing Emergency Assistance to Families</i> (ARC 3072-1) <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Client Casework: Providing Emergency Assistance</i> (ARC 3072-6) once released.
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Course Length	<p>This one-day course contains approximately 6.5 hours of instruction, two 15-minute breaks and a one-hour lunch, at the instructor's discretion, to comprise an eight-hour day. Full attendance of the entire course is required to receive a certificate of completion.</p>
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How the Course is Scheduled	<p>The sponsoring Red Cross unit will schedule this training for a preferred minimum of eight (8) participants. The maximum number of participants is limited only by the ability of the sponsoring unit to provide a training facility to comfortably accommodate the class and to maintain an instructor to participant ratio of one instructor for every 15 participants.</p>
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Instructor Requirements

This course will be taught by one or more qualified Disaster Services instructors who, in addition to meeting the basic disaster services instructor requirements, meet the following criteria:

- Are currently licensed by a state as a mental health professional
 - Have been actively engaged during the previous two years at the local Red Cross unit level with community outreach activities, or served as a disaster mental health worker in preparedness, response or recovery on local or larger disaster relief operations
 - Possess a thorough understanding of the concepts being presented in the training, such that he or she can clearly convey them
 - Are familiar with the disaster plan of the local service delivery unit
 - Have successfully completed the *Foundations of Disaster Mental Health* course (ARC 3077-4)
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